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agree with in general, rather hastily referred the case in question to the same category. A second glance would hardly have seen either bravado or foolhardiness in the capture of a snake of which an alcoholic specimen just previously examined, had given incontrovertible proofs of its utter harmlessness.—W. H. Dall.

The Black Vulture in Maine.—I had sent me (shot in this neighborhood) a good specimen of the Black Vulture (*Cathartes atratus*), the first one I ever knew so far east; and also a fine specimen of the Purple Gallinule (*Gallinula martinica*).—G. A. Boardman, *Calais, Me.*

MICROSCOPY.

Method of Preserving Animal Specimens for fine dissection.—Microscopists will read with interest a very simple method of preserving animal specimens for fine dissection. It is described by Dr. Alcock. The advantages of the plan are very perfect preservation; no necessity for closing up, so that the specimen cannot be got at; no fear of losing a valuable dissection from accidental evaporation, as when spirit is used; lastly, cheapness. The method adopted is to prepare a saturated solution of corrosive sublimate in alcohol, and when a dissection in water is in progress, a small quantity—half a teaspoonful—of the solution is to be added from day to day if the slightest appearance of putrefaction is observed, but no more of it is used than is absolutely necessary; and by the time the dissection is completed, the specimen has become imperishable from the union of the corrosive sublimate with the tissues, and it may then be kept in pure water, either open or mounted, in the usual way.—*Quarterly Journal of Science, London.*

GEOLOGY.

The Eozoön in Essex County. The remains of this, the oldest form of animal life thus far discovered on our globe, and found in the azoic [Laurentian] rocks of Ottawa, Canada, have, it is confidently believed, been within a few days detected in the serpentine of our "Devil's Den." The animal, if it may be so called, has been arranged by naturalists among the rhizopods, and would seem to have been a jelly-like living mass, spreading out on the bottom of the sea, capable of secreting calcareous partitions, and thus forming small chambers or cells, the interior of which has become filled by serpentine, which was deposited from the waters of the ocean, and took the place of the decomposing animated mass. This discovery, resulting from a visit of Prof. T. Sterry Hunt of Montreal to our neighborhood, will excite new interest in our limestone and serpentine quarry among geologists, and throw additional light upon the character and age of the rocks in this region.

Mr. Edwin Bicknell (Preparator of the Peabody Academy of Science, Salem), has, by a careful microscopic comparison of a specimen of Eo-